

## Message Text

PAGE 01 SINGAP 01896 071015Z

16

ACTION SR-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 AGR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ITF-05 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IGA-01

EB-07 SCA-01 ORM-01 AID-05 IO-10 VO-03 INSE-00 /085 W

----- 049411

O R 070943Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2499

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 1896

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS, SN

SUBJ: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN SINGAPORE

REFS: A. STATE 105422 (NOTAL); B. STATE 104063

1. BELIEVE REF A LARGELY MISSES THE POINT. GOS FULLY UNDERSTANDS OUR POSITION WHICH WE HAVE REITERATED SEVERAL TIMES. THE KEY FACT IS THAT SINGAPORE IS UNWILLING (THEY ARGUE UNABLE) TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE 7000 REFUGEES NOW IN SINGAPORE WATERS. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE NOT SAID SO DIRECTLY, THEY, I AM SURE, FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN REFUGEES WHO WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO MEET USN VESSELS AT SEA AND NOW ENROUTE SUBIC AND GUAM AND THOSE WHO WERE UNLUCKY AND ENDED UP IN SINGAPORE. THEY PROBABLY WONDER AS WELL WHY THESE REFUGEES SEEM TO BE IN A DIFFERENT CATEGORY FROM THOSE WHO WENT TO THAILAND AND ARE BEING PAROLED. IN ANY EVENT, THEY SAY QUITE ACCURATELY THAT THESE 7000 ARE NOT SEEKING PERMANENT REFUGE IN SINGAPORE BUT WANT PROVISIONS AND FUEL TO GO ELSEWHERE, MOSTLY UNFORTUNATELY TO SUBIC AND POSSIBLY GUAM. GOS WOULD PROBABLY BE QUITE COOPERATIVE IF WE COULD GUARANTEE THAT ALL REFUGEES WHO COULD NOT BE SETTLED IN SINGAPORE OR ELSEWHERE WOULD BE TAKEN BY THE UNITED STATES. AS REPORTED IN SINGAPORE 1691, GOS WAS WILLING AT CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SINGAP 01896 071015Z

ONE POINT TO TAKE 20 TO 30 PERCENT OF REFUGEES COMING HERE ON THEIR OWN IF WE WOULD TAKE THE REST. WE NEVER RESPONDED TO THAT OFFER, WHICH HAS BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS, BUT IT DOES REFLECT A WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE GOS TO TAKE A PORTION OF THE

REFUGEES IF WE WOULD GUARANTEE THE REST. MY AUSTRALIAN COLLEAGUE TELLS ME HIS GOVERNMENT HAS ADOPTED MORE LIBERAL CRITERIA FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES -- AND IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THOSE IN SINGAPORE, IF THEY COULD GET TO THEM.

2. IN SHORT, THE SITUATION BOILS DOWN TO THE FOLLOWING TWO OPTIONS. WE CAN ASSURE THE GOS THAT WE WILL ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL REFUGEES WHO CANNOT BE RESETTLED THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF THE VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, PRINCIPALLY THE UNHCR, AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS (INCLUDING SINGAPORE), IN WHICH CASE THEY WILL PROBABLY AGREE TO OFFLOAD THE REFUGEES AND SORT THEM OUT IN AN ORDERLY MANNER. OR, WE CAN CONTINUE TO INSIST IT IS THEIR PROBLEM, IN WHICH CASE THEY WILL PROBABLY FUEL UP AND PROVISION THE SHIPS AND SEND THEM ON THEIR WAY. IN THAT EVENT, WE ARE LIKELY TO END UP WITH ALMOST ALL OF THEM. WE HAVE APPROXIMATELY TWO DAYS TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THESE TWO COURSES. FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE BETTER OPTION IS THE FIRST.

3. APPRECIATE POSITIVE RESPONSES RECEIVED ON ORPHANS AND RICE. CRONK

CONFIDENTIAL

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 26 AUG 1999  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, POLICIES  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Review Authority:** RowellE0  
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